

Third Place. MLK Essay Contest 2020,



## **If I Cannot Do Great Things, I Can Do Small Things in a Great Way**

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As we all know, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., has many great quotes, but the quote, “If I cannot do great things, I can do small things in a great way,” is one of his greatest.

In my research on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., I was curious to find out what exactly motivated this particular quote. I learned that most, if not all, of Dr. King’s quotes were related to the civil rights movement.

The goal of the civil rights movement was to achieve one great idea and that was equal rights for all. Also I learned that equality would not have been achieved without smaller individual contributions from prominent leaders and lesser known individuals.

During the Civil Rights era, black people were no longer slaves, but were still treated unfairly. This type of treatment mainly occurred in the southern states. Inequality was often seen on signs and in different facilities. Often you would see “For Whites” or “For Colored” signs on things like water fountains, restrooms, or in segregated schools and restaurants.

I believe that Dr. King’s passion and desire for change for equality is what sparked this great quote. A prime example of a small thing was when Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a public bus to a white man. Rosa Parks may have felt that what she did was small, but it resulted in a great thing!

When I look at some of the things I have done such as volunteering at the church’s food bank, bringing joy to the elderly at the nursing home, and providing tutoring to my peers, all seem small. But I have realized that although they may be small, I did them all in a great way.

To me this quote also means: Do not be discouraged if you don’t accomplish your biggest goal at first. Start by doing small steps that can help lead you toward your major goal.

I know that I will eventually reach my goal step by step no matter how small the steps are, I will keep working toward it. Doing small things can go a long way.

Not many people have or will make a large impact on the world but if we all at least do what we can, no matter how small it is and it is a positive step it's a "small" step in the right direction.

I have learned more about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s tremendous contributions to our nation and how we all have benefited from his legacy.

We all should make the little or small things we do matter as much as the big things. With that said, I cannot imagine Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., doing small things, only great things!